

CLEAN VERSION

In the claims:

Cancel claim 13.

Please amend claims 12, 16, 18, 27, 28, and 29 as follows:

12. A billing system for delivering billing statements from a biller to a recipient by means of a printed transmission or electronic transmission, comprising:

a billing server coupled to a biller's computer operative to receive billing information from said biller's computer and determine whether said billing information is intended for said printed transmission or said electronic transmission;

a printer operably connected to said server operative to generate a printed billing statement from said billing information;

an electronic information server operably connected to said billing server, said electronic information server operative to convert said billing information for electronic transmission and generate an electronic billing statement from said billing information and electronically transmit the electronic billing statement to the at least one recipient over a communications network;

routing means coupled to said billing server for routing said billing information to said printer if said billing statement is determined to be transmitted by said printed transmission and to said electronic information server if said billing statement is determined to be transmitted by said electronic transmission; and

a lookup table coupled to said billing server, said lookup table containing delivery preferences for the at least one recipient indicating whether a billing statement is to be

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transmitted by a said printed transmission or electronic transmission, said routing means routing billing information in accordance with said delivery preferences.

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16. A billing system as recited in claim 12 wherein the electronic information server includes means for determining whether or not a said recipient has retrieved a transmitted electronic billing statement.

18. A method for delivering billing statements from a biller to a recipient by means of a printed transmission or electronic transmission, comprising the steps of:

generate billing information for at least one recipient from a biller's computer;

prescribing delivery preferences for said billing information;

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associating said delivery preferences with said billing information to determine if said billing information is to be transmitted via printed transmission or electronic transmission;

generating a printed billing statement from said billing information if said billing information was determined to be transmitted via printed transmission;

converting said billing information for electronic transmission if said billing information was determined to be transmitted via electronic transmission; and

generating an electronic billing statement from said converted billing information if said billing information was determined to be transmitted via electronic transmission.

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27. A method according to claim 26, further comprising storing the prescribed delivery preferences in said database prior to the generation of said billing information.

28. A method according to claim 26, further comprising determining whether said recipients to whom electronic billing statements have been electronically transmitted have retrieved said electronic billing statements.

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29. A method according to claim 26, further comprising electronically transmitting funds from said recipients to a biller for whom said billing information is generated.
